

10-1-1942

Warden Haynes

Fred E. Haynes

Follow this and additional works at: <https://ir.uiowa.edu/palimpsest>

Part of the [United States History Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Haynes, Fred E. "Warden Haynes." *The Palimpsest* 23 (1942), 305-316.
Available at: <https://ir.uiowa.edu/palimpsest/vol23/iss10/2>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the State Historical Society of Iowa at Iowa Research Online. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Palimpsest by an authorized administrator of Iowa Research Online. For more information, please contact lib-ir@uiowa.edu.

THE PALIMPSEST

EDITED BY JOHN ELY BRIGGS

VOL. XXIII

ISSUED IN OCTOBER 1942

NO. 10

COPYRIGHT 1942 BY THE STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF IOWA



Warden Haynes

The death of Warden Glenn C. Haynes on June 6, 1942, ended an administration of nearly nine years at Fort Madison, in which the State Penitentiary was transformed from a rather laxly conducted prison into one of the best administered penitentiaries in the country. Warden Haynes had had no penological experience when he assumed his duties, but he was an excellent administrator with wide experience in handling men. He was unusually fair in all his decisions, and he had an open mind for new methods of treatment of prisoners.

Warden Haynes was fifty-seven years old when he began his career as a prison administrator. Born on August 25, 1876, at Centerville, Iowa, he was christened Glenn Clinton. His father, Eugene Cassitt Haynes, had come to Iowa in 1850 at the age of six to live with his grandparents when his mother died. Two years later he rejoined his father who had established a new

home in Appanoose County. There he grew up, attended Troy Normal School in Davis County, and presumably was preparing to be a teacher when the Civil War interrupted his studies. At the age of seventeen he enlisted in Company D of the Sixth Iowa Volunteer Infantry and served throughout the war. On August 5, 1864, he was commissioned first lieutenant. After the war he studied at the State University of Iowa, began the practice of law at Centerville, married Elma M. Felkner, and held public offices. Into the busy environment of a prominent and growing family (nine children eventually) was born Glenn C. Haynes.

As a boy Glenn attended the public schools of Centerville. By the time he was thirteen his father was postmaster and Glenn, like his older brother Henry and sister Bess, found duties at the office. He must have been apt at sorting mail for in 1893 he became assistant postmaster and continued in that capacity until 1909, though from 1894 to 1898 his father was displaced by a Democratic postmaster. Having early decided upon his career and being already well established in the classified postal service, he married Mamie Lane in December, 1896. Between 1910 and 1915 he was assigned to postal inspection duty with headquarters in Washington, St. Louis, and Chattanooga.

Thereafter for two years he was assistant postmaster at Mount Vernon, Iowa. Thus, for twenty-four years he was in the United States civil service.

Meanwhile, he had not neglected the military service. In July, 1892, when he was only fifteen years old, he joined Company E of the Second Regiment of the Iowa National Guard, of which his brother Henry was then captain. When Company E was recruited to war-time strength as part of the Fiftieth Iowa Volunteer Infantry, in the spring of 1898, Henry C. Haynes was reappointed captain and Glenn C. Haynes served as first sergeant. Their military experience in the war with Spain was confined chiefly to avoiding disease in camp at Jacksonville, Florida. Glenn continued his National Guard service, being commissioned lieutenant in 1899 and captain in 1900. From 1910 to 1914 he held the rank of major. When the United States declared war on Germany in 1917 he rejoined his old company at Centerville and became captain of Company D of the 168th Infantry in the Rainbow Division. With this famous regiment he fought in some of the fiercest battles in France.

Upon the return of the American troops, Major Haynes resumed his National Guard status with the rank of lieutenant colonel, then colonel, and

finally, upon retirement in 1936, he was commissioned brigadier general by Governor Clyde L. Herring. Indeed, he declared that the National Guard was his only hobby, though he was also active in the American Legion of which he was Commander of the Iowa Department in 1929-1930.

After the war Glenn C. Haynes solved the problem of readjustment in civil life by going into the real estate business at Mason City. Politics soon claimed his attention, however, and he was elected State Auditor in 1920 and reëlected in 1922 by decisive majorities. In 1924 he was defeated for the Republican nomination for Governor and thereupon became secretary of the Iowa Good Roads Association. Under his direction for nine years the campaign to get Iowa "out of the mud" made tremendous progress. Opinion shifted rapidly in support of investing millions of dollars in the development of a State-wide system of all-weather highways. From less than five hundred miles of paving near the principal cities when he took charge of the program of hard-road education, the ribbons of concrete spread over the State to the extent of nearly four thousand miles when he resigned in 1933 to become warden of the State Penitentiary.

Though an active Republican, Colonel Haynes

was selected as warden during the Democratic administration of Governor Herring. He was not an expert in prison management but his long service in public office, his military experience, and his reputation for integrity qualified him for the position. At the time of his appointment there was serious unrest among the prisoners and persons familiar with the situation feared an outbreak. The new warden quickly had things under control. There was never a serious disturbance under his administration and escapes were infrequent.

Many rumors spread through the institution as to his plans and policies. Newspaper opposition to his appointment stimulated these unfavorable reactions both inside and out. One of the first problems to demand attention was the existence of special privileges among the prisoners. Certain groups of inmates had formed a favored class. That situation was promptly remedied. Inmates had been allowed to buy clothing for themselves, with the result that some of them were better dressed than the guards. An order was issued for all inmates to dispose of private wearing apparel, which caused a mild protest by some prisoners in their cells. Later all guards were required to wear uniforms.

Then the warden turned his attention to sanitary conditions. He ordered all bedbugs and

cockroaches exterminated. All cells and cell-houses were thoroughly cleaned and painted. For the first time the inmates began to wonder if they were correct in their criticism of the new warden.

Later the same year, he sponsored an inmate minstrel show. At Christmas time he permitted the inmates to receive packages of foodstuffs from relatives and friends. In the spring of 1934 he ordered work rushed on the hill back of the prison in order to make the new recreation field ready for the baseball season. A broad sports program was planned for the summer months.

In 1935 for the first time in the history of the institution the inmates were permitted to spend the evenings, five days a week, in the yard. On Sunday afternoon, baseball games were played with visiting teams from the outside. Field and track meets were held on holidays and banquets were given by the warden to the participants in baseball and football.

A band and bugle corps was organized, and the inmate minstrel show became an annual affair. A canteen was opened, which proved to be very popular. A much larger and better school system was introduced. Chapel services became voluntary. Through the efforts of the warden losses of "good time", because of infraction of the rules, were restored so that good behavior materially re-

duced the maximum term of confinement. In 1936 the "expiration allowance" was increased from five to fifteen dollars, and each inmate was given additional wearing apparel upon his release.

Warden Haynes continued his policy of innovations throughout his administration. He tried many experiments. Sometimes they succeeded, sometimes they were given up. All had the objective of improving conditions for the prisoners. His fairness and sound judgment, manifested in these undertakings, gained and held the respect of his charges.

One of his most successful enterprises was the establishment of a monthly magazine, edited and published by the inmates. This paper, known as *The Presidio*, has taken its place as one of the leaders in penal journalism. Under a succession of editors it has also acted as "the inmate voice" of the prison. It has helped to interpret the warden's policies to the inmates.

Educational opportunities for the prisoners were developed by Warden Haynes. The regular school was discontinued in 1937 and a cell-study school was organized. Arrangements were made to use courses from the Stateville (Illinois) Correspondence School, the institution paying postage. More recently a vocational training program has been developed, using the facilities offered in the

industrial work of the institution. The original purpose was to fit men for work outside when released. After national defense and war preparation came to be the major interest, the emphasis was changed to aid in the war program.

Another progressive step at Fort Madison was the establishment of a classification system growing out of the mental tests given the prisoners in connection with the school work. The warden asked for the coöperation of the State University in the interpretation of the results. Out of this study a plan was developed by which a University graduate student spent one week a month at the prison as a psychologist and sociologist, interviewing new prisoners and making recommendations as to their placement and treatment. In return for this service, the student is given an opportunity for research at the institution.

About two years ago a classification committee was organized, composed of the warden, deputy warden, chaplain, doctor, record clerk, and the psychologist and sociologist. A guard was assigned by Warden Haynes to devote his entire time to the work as secretary of the committee. He supplements the reports of the committee by social histories obtained from the outside by correspondence. Upon this material as a basis the committee attempts to classify the men. It is

hoped that in time a psychologist or sociologist may be provided from State funds. The present arrangement is inadequate to classify all prisoners.

The research side of this coöperative plan has given opportunity for the collection of materials for two Ph. D. dissertations at the University, and a number of studies of phases of prison life have been made. The contact between selected students and the prisoners has been so valuable to both parties that it has come to be recognized in the institution as a normal arrangement.

Warden Haynes's ability to solve institutional problems is shown by his handling of the excess of prisoners above the number of available cells. In 1940 there were 250 men more than there were cells. This shortage of accommodations was remedied by the assignment of men to the farms and to other institutions under the Board of Control. The remainder were housed in a dormitory which was conducted on an honor plan for some time — another interesting experiment in prison administration. Besides those quartered outside, there were approximately two hundred men who worked outside but returned to their cells at night.

In 1940, after some preliminary conferences between the warden and inmates, every prisoner was permitted to vote for members of an inmate committee for the management of athletics. The

seven men who received the highest number of votes were designated as the Athletic Committee.

The profits of the canteen, established in 1935, were used for the promotion of athletics, entertainment, music, library books, and magazines. The prices charged are never higher and in many cases are lower than prices in outside retail stores. Chickens and turkeys, as well as fruit and candy, have been purchased for holidays to supplement the regular allowances for food. The Board of Control authorized the warden to use these funds for any purposes that he deemed beneficial to the inmates.

Miscellaneous activities may be listed in addition to those already described. A military band takes part in the athletic events, much in the manner of similar collegiate activities. An orchestra furnishes music at two meals daily, joins the band at games, helps in the various shows, and plays at the chapel services.

In 1940 and 1941 the State University symphony orchestra presented concerts for the prisoners. Warden Lewis E. Lawes, who happened to be lecturing in Iowa, was quoted as saying it was the first time he had ever heard of a symphony concert being given to the inmates of a large prison.

Skating facilities were provided in the inner

yard in 1941 and in the big recreation field in 1942. Dizzy Dean visited the prison in 1941 and spoke to the inmate body in the auditorium. Dr. Eddie Anderson, football coach, and Jim Youel, student halfback at the State University, spoke to the inmates in the auditorium upon another occasion.

These comments upon the administration of Warden Haynes suggest a sort of composite picture of life in a prison where a modern viewpoint prevails. His administrative achievements illustrate very clearly how much can be done by constructive leadership even with the handicap of old and inadequate buildings.

In the September, 1940, number of *The Presidio*, Warden Haynes reviewed the seven years of his administration. He emphasized the need of coöperation between officers and the inmates. He believed that he had such coöperation from the great majority of prisoners, "and yet there are days when some trusted prisoner goes wrong or some employee fails to do his job that the warden thinks 'what the Hell's the use.' The next day he sees a group of men working, perhaps not even under supervision, like they owned the place and he starts all over again."

The final tribute to the warden in an editorial in *The Presidio* in July, 1942, is significant. "In his

nine years as warden," declared the inmate editor, "he wrought many changes. He found a prison where bedbugs and cockroaches were taken for granted — he left a prison that is cleaner than many civilian homes. While he brought army discipline to men who resented it fiercely, he brought the army officer's impartial, impersonal justice — to the very end he fought for absolute impartiality in the treatment of all prisoners.

"Prisoners do not 'like' or 'revere' wardens — the mere fact of their relationship makes that impossible. The most any warden can hope for — and such wardens are rare — is to win the average prisoner's respect. A few will like him — a few will hate him — but if he wins the respect of the average prisoner he will have been successful. Warden Haynes gained and kept the respect of his charges — he will not soon be forgotten."

FRED E. HAYNES